

Nokia's game

Nokia's fourth-quarter sales rose 1% compared with the fourth quarter 2001, reaching €8.8bn. Sales for mobile phones were flat year on year, reaching €6.7bn.

In networks, sales grew by 6% to €2.1bn, including €370m in 3G dual-mode revenue recognition and reflecting strong growth in the US, partially offset by weaker sales in China.

Fourth-quarter pro forma operating profit for the Nokia group reached €1.7bn, including a net gain of €87m from Nokia Venture Partners investments within Nokia Ventures Organisation.

Fourth-quarter pro forma operating profit for mobile phones was up 13% year on year.

For first quarter 2003 Nokia mobiles are forecast to grow, but sales are estimated to be higher in the second than first quarter.

The mobile phone market returned to growth in 2002 with overall market volumes reaching about 405m units. A growth of more than 5% compared with volumes

in 2001 of around 380m units. Market volume grew year on year in Europe and AsiaPacific, both rising by about 8%.

In 2002, the company estimated the global subscriber base to have grown to 1.125m users projecting this to exceed 1.5bn in 2005.

Revenue growth will primarily be driven by MMS, already launched by around 100 major operators, and other advanced services based on openness, global roaming and interoperability.

During the fourth quarter, Sendo UK, joined Matsushita, Samsung, Siemens and Nokia, (approximately 60% of the total global mobile phone market) in licensing Series 60.

Nokia alone will ship at least 10m Series 60 smart phones during 2003. The Finnish company's latest development is an interesting collaboration with the games publisher Sega to develop games for the new Nokia N-Gage mobile game running on Series 60 with Symbian OS.

Aeronex expands R&D

San Diego based Aeronex, a gas purification supplier, has experienced a 34% increase in sales in 2002, a 6% increase in profits, and a 13% growth in personnel, with the need for expanded R&D facilities, leading to the decision to add 20% more space. The continued growth for Aeronex through a year of semiconductor equipment contraction was generated by a focus on emerging applications and next generation tool sales.

"Aeronex had a significant number of design wins last year that enabled us to grow in a very difficult economic climate," said president Jeff Spiegelman. "Our new facilities (Class 100 and 10,000 cleanrooms, R&D labs and test engineering lab) enable us to track more contaminants to parts per trillion levels than before," added director of R&D Dan Alvarez. "Especially those that cause concern in the photolithography process. This allows us to provide better product characterisation and bring products to market faster." The new lab has state-of-the-art gas delivery systems to all instruments and test stations and is designed for future expansion.

Markets & Business

One of Germany's research institutions, the Institute für Telematik in Trier focused on the Internet has to close due to a severe lack of funds. Up to two thirds of its income were provided by companies, which placed R&D business with the Institute. Due to the on going recession in Germany, sufficient funds were not available. The Institute's Association has appointed a liquidator to head the proceedings.

Contact: http://www.ti.fhg.de/presse_und_medien/pressemitteilungen/index.html

The European project 'Sense' on TFT solar cells is underway with Umicore as the only industrial partner for the supply of raw materials such as CdTe. The specialist materials supplier will also take part in the development of industrial methods to recycle solar cells. The Group (2001 turnover of €3.5bn with 9,000 employees) has been unsuccessful in its bids for Picogiga and more recently Sterling Semiconductor, and is still presumably eyeing up the III-V sector.

A German university that has developed a new, low-cost process for epitaxial growth of thin SiC films on Si substrates is looking for licensee partners. The concept is to produce buried, unstrained 3C-SiC layers in silicon by ion beam synthesis and to subsequently expose these layers at the surface by a sophisticated wet-chemical technique, so the buried single-crystal SiC layer functions as a natural etch stop. With this technique, the desired smooth epitaxial SiC (100) or (111) surface is achieved. SiC can be doped p- and n-type and it forms an insulating thermal oxide.

Contact: http://www.techno-prise.co.uk/cgi-bin/ttd/view/view_profile.plx?pro_id=69

Skyworks' merger flies

Skyworks Solutions, Inc the wireless semiconductor company which emerged in June 2002 from the merger between Alpha Industries and Conexant Systems' wireless communications business is focused on providing front-end modules, RF subsystems and cellular systems to wireless handset and infrastructure customers worldwide, had revenues of \$160.2m the first quarter ended 2002, up 26% as compared with combined company revenues of \$126.9m in the same period

last year. Revenues were up more than 6% sequentially from fourth quarter revenues of \$150.7m GAAP operating income in the first quarter was \$6.4m.

Excluding one-time items, operating income was \$3.7m against combined company losses of \$30.8m in the same period last year and \$0.5m of operating income last quarter. David J. Aldrich, Skyworks' president and chief executive officer said "Building on the success of our early achievement

of operating profitability, the December period marks our sixth consecutive quarter of revenue growth with improving operating results."

"In parallel, we successfully completed an accretive transaction to finance our Mexicali, Mexico assembly and test facility as well as to retire virtually all short-term debt. Today Skyworks is poised to capture market share based on design win momentum, a solid financial position and a track record of strong execution."